

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5826

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions, February 26, 2001
Ways & Means, March 8, 2001

Title: An act relating to collective bargaining for University of Washington employees who are enrolled in academic programs.

Brief Description: Authorizing collective bargaining for University of Washington employees who are enrolled in academic programs.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl-Welles, Prentice and Winsley; by request of University of Washington.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 2/15/01, 2/26/01 [DPS-WM, DNP].
Ways & Means: 3/7/01, 3/8/01 [DP2S, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5826 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Fairley, Franklin, Patterson, Rasmussen, Regala and Winsley.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Benton, Deccio, Hochstatter, Honeyford and West.

Staff: Jack Brummel (786-7428)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5826 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Brown, Chair; Constantine, Vice Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Fraser, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Regala, B. Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Thibaudeau and Winsley.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Rossi and Zarelli.

Staff: Karen Barrett (786-7711)

Background: In 1987, employees at the University of Washington print shop were authorized to collectively bargain under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). In 1993, all classified employees at institutions of higher education were allowed to elect to collectively bargain either under the requirements of the state's civil service law or under PECBA. Teaching assistants enrolled in institutions of higher education are not classified employees and currently do not have the right to collectively bargain.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill: Students enrolled at the University of Washington who provide instructional services may collectively bargain under PECBA. Agreements reached over salary and health insurance are subject to the same restrictions that now apply under current law to bargaining by classified employees under PECBA. The university is not obligated to bargain over termination for academic reasons, the size of a particular class, the academic calendar, or the amount of tuition or fees. The cost to bargain with organized student instructors, teaching assistants, lecturers, tutors, and graders as well as any agreed upon provisions must be financed from local administrative efficiencies.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The Legislature grants this authority with an expression of intent that bargaining should not, among other things, result in a reduction of educational opportunities for UW students. Limits are placed on collective bargaining agreements with respect to compensation actions. The student employees recognized do not include university research assistants. Salary increases (cash stipends) negotiated for student teaching assistants in the bargaining unit are subject to legislative appropriation and modification as provided in current state law. Parties may not bargain over state paid health insurance. Agreements may include salary increases supported by local efficiency savings even when the resulting improvements put teaching assistants' compensation beyond an amount or percentage authorized in the state's operating budget. However, these locally financed salary improvements must not be included in the base subsequently provided by the university to the Governor and Legislature for use when the state considers future salary adjustments for university employees. Operational impacts of bargaining and any resulting agreement are to be paid from administrative cost savings.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The original bill was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The University and the TAs have agreed on this bill. The university wants to avoid the upheaval of labor unrest. TAs can teach their own courses and may be the only real instructor in a class. The bill would confirm the relationship the TAs have started with the UW and provides an ability for the two sides to negotiate.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Kohl-Welles, sponsor; Dick Thompson, Karen Kavanaugh, UW; Kristen Intemann, GSEAC; Gorkem Kuterderm, GPSS.

